



NORTH FORK AHTANUM LAND EXCHANGE

Proposed Land Exchange Between Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Ahtanum Irrigation District (AID)

OBJECTIVE

DNR will reposition land assets in the western portion of the Ahtanum State Forest. This exchange will consolidate ownership, which will provide long-term trust revenue for the public school construction fund, increase land management efficiencies and create public ownership areas large enough for sustaining multiple values such as habitat, recreation and forest resources.

BENEFITS

- Ownership consolidation will improve operational efficiency.
- Key in-holdings will be obtained.
- Added protection of trust values by avoiding potential conflicts with non-compatible activities on or near existing trust lands.
- Exchange will compliment other future land exchanges being considered by DNR.
- Provides additional DNR control over the landscape where current Habitat Conservation Plan lands exist, which is likely to enhance DNR's habitat efforts for the Northern Spotted Owl.
- State trust property lines are reduced with associated cost savings.
- Recreational opportunities may be increased.
- Sustainability of forest landscapes and forest health are enhanced.

EXCHANGE SPECIFICS

AID to DNR 2,600± acres

DNR to AID 2,700± acres

Exchange involves one county: Yakima County

Exchange involves one trust: Common School Trust

AID lands to DNR

- The properties are mostly forested and above 4,000' elevation. Primarily industrial forestland, much of which has been harvested.
- Properties are situated in a checkerboard ownership pattern with DNR trust properties and most were originally owned by railroad companies at the beginning of the 20th century.
- AID has owned their properties since 1946.
- The tree species and vegetation types found on the AID properties are representative of those found at the higher elevations on the east slope of the Cascades.
- A few of the wildlife species present on the AID properties include: ruffed grouse, hawks, mule deer, Rocky Mountain elk, and neo-tropical migrants.

DNR lands to AID

- DNR trust exchange lands are mostly forested and above 4,000' in elevation. Some of the DNR trust lands have been harvested.
- DNR trust lands are primarily located in checkerboard ownership patterns with AID lands.
- A few of the wildlife species present on the DNR properties include: ruffed grouse, hawks, mule deer, Rocky Mountain elk, and neo-tropical migrants.
- The tree species and vegetation types found on the DNR properties are representative of those found at the higher elevations on the east slope of the Cascades.

Habitat Conservation Plan

- DNR trust properties under exchange consideration have the following HCP role (acreages are approximate):
 - Nesting, Roosting, and Foraging (NRF): 0 acres
 - Dispersal: 1,550 acres
 - No Role: 1,150 acres
- DNR will evaluate the AID property proposed to come to the trusts, and will continue working with the Services as to what designation various acreage will have under the HCP.

EXCHANGE BALANCE

- The final exchange of property will be balanced for equal market value between the state trusts (DNR) and NCI.
- Values are to be determined by an independent market appraisal.
- Not all lands being appraised will necessarily be included in the exchange.
- The Common School trust will be repositioned to land of equal market value.

WHAT'S NEXT

- Information meetings begin in November and public hearings may occur in early 2007.
- Website will be updated as changes occur.
- Third party appraisal contract will be awarded.
- Review of appraisals and value balancing.
- Parties agree on lands to be exchanged.
- Final agreement is presented to the Board of Natural Resources for decision.

CONTACT

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Additional information is available on our website: www.dnr.wa.gov